

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 BONN 05006 201555Z
ACTION SS-25

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O P 201540Z MAR 78
FM AMEMBASSY BONN
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INFO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS IMMEDIATE
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USMISSION USNATO IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY ANKARA PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY ATHENS PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY LISBON PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY ROME PRIORITY

S E C R E T BONN 05006

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: NATO, MNUC, GW
SUBJECT: ERW CONSULTATIONS

REFERENCE: STATE 70801

1. AT OPENING OF BUSINESS ON MARCH 20, THE DCM CONVEYED THE DECISION AND EXPLANATION IN PARA ONE OF REFTEL TO FONOFF POLITICAL DIRECTOR BLECH AND AT THE SAME TIME THE POLITICAL COUNSELOR INFORMED AMBASSADOR RUTH.

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2. LATER IN THE MORNING, BLECH TOLD THE DCM THAT FOREIGN MINISTER GENSCHER HAD EXPRESSED CONCERN OVER THE SINE DIE POSTPONEMENT OF ERW CONSULTATIONS IN THE NAC. BLECH SAID GENSCHER WOULD LIKE TO KNOW MORE ABOUT THE RATIONALE FOR THE POSTPONEMENT. IT WAS NOT CLEAR TO THE FRG WHY AN INTRA-ALLIANCE DECISION ON ERW WAS CONNECTED TO THE SITUATION IN LEBANON AND THE BEGIN

VISIT. BLECH SAID HE COULD IMAGINE THAT THERE WERE
"OTHER MORE SPECIFIC REASONS."

3. BLECH SAID THE POSTPONEMENT WAS A BIT EMBARRASSING
FOR THE GERMAN GOVERNMENT. THE FRG HAD WORKED HARD FOR
AN AGREED POSITION, AND HAD BEEN OF THE VIEW THAT A
CONSENSUS COULD HAVE BEEN OBTAINED IN THE NAC ON MARCH
22. BLECH SAID THE FRG HAD MADE IT QUITE CLEAR THAT
THE GERMAN TANK OPTION WOULD NOT HAVE MEANT A SLOWING
DOWN OF THE CONSENSUS. ALSO, BLECH POINTED OUT THAT
THE FRG HAD LOBBIED WITH THE NETHERLANDS AND BELGIUM
ON BEHALF OF A CONSENSUS. HE SAID THE FRG HAD RECEIVED
THE IMPRESSION THAT REPRESENTATIVES OF THESE TWO
COUNTRIES MIGHT HAVE REMAINED SILENT IN THE NAC, SINCE
THE CONSENSUS ENVISIONED WOULD NOT HAVE PREJUDICED
NATIONAL DEPLOYMENT DECISIONS. IN SHORT, BLECH FELT
THAT WE HAD BEEN AT A VERY FAVORABLE MOMENT IN TIME FOR
A CONSENSUS.

4. BLECH SAID HE WAS NOW CONCERNED THAT THE FRAGILE
SCENARIO WE HAD BUILT UP COULD BE PLACED IN JEOPARDY -
NOT, HE EMPHASIZED, FROM WITHIN THE FRG, BUT BECAUSE OF
POSSIBLE SECOND THOUGHTS ON THE PART OF OTHERS (E.G.,
THE NETHERLANDS AND BELGIUM). ALSO, THERE COULD BE
PRESS LEAKS WHICH COULD INTRODUCE NEW PRESSURES AND
COMPLICATIONS.

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5. BLECH EMPHASIZED THAT THE GERMAN GOVERNMENT WAS AS
WILLING AS EVER TO PURSUE A CONSENSUS AS PREVIOUSLY
ENVISIONED. HOWEVER, HE FELT THAT TO MAXIMIZE THE
CHANCE OF OBTAINING SUCH A CONSENSUS, THE SCENARIO WHICH
WE HAD CONSTRUCTED SHOULD BE PUT BACK ON TRACK AS SOON
AS POSSIBLE.

6. BLECH SAID THE FRG WOULD APPRECIATE KNOWING MORE
ABOUT WHY WASHINGTON HAD DECIDED FOR THE POSTPONEMENT
OF THE ERW DISCUSSION AS WELL AS WHEN THE USG WOULD
ENVISION THE DISCUSSION TAKING PLACE.

7. COMMENT: ALTHOUGH THE GERMANS ARE DISAPPOINTED BY
THE POSTPONEMENT, THEY STILL APPEAR VERY WILLING TO
WORK HARD FOR A CONSENSUS AND THEY FEEL THE NAC SHOULD
ADDRESS THE QUESTION QUICKLY BEFORE THE OPPORTUNITY
FOR A CONSENSUS IS LOST. FROM WHAT WE KNOW HERE, IT
WOULD SEEM TO BE IN OUR BEST INTEREST TO PROVIDE THE
GERMANS, ON AN URGENT BASIS, WITH AS MUCH RATIONALE
AS POSSIBLE FOR THE POSTPONEMENT AND WITH AN INDICATION
OF WHEN WE FEEL THE NAC DISCUSSION SHOULD BE HELD.

8. ACTION REQUESTED: WASHINGTON GUIDANCE.
STOESSEL

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NNN

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